

OUR RURAL LIFE AND FARM PROBLEMS

An Address by

S. A. LINDSEY,

Chairman Texas Farm Life Commission



ISSUED BY

**TEXAS COMMERCIAL SECRETARIES
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S. A. Lindsey

REMOTE STORAGE

NOTE: Write me what you think of the problem. The Commission needs your suggestion. This means you.

S. A. LINDSEY, Chairman,
Tyler, Texas.

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Delivered before the Third Annual Farmers' Short Winter Course.

A. & M. College, Jan. 8, 1913.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Texas Farm Life Commission is a branch of the Texas Commercial Secretaries and Business Men's Association, which proposes to devote its especial attention to farm life conditions in this State. The appointment of the Texas Farm Life Commission is a natural sequence. It grew out of the study which the Welfare Commission made of economic and industrial conditions in this State. The Commission was created because there is work for it to do in Texas. It is not proposed to usurp the field of any other agencies, nor lessen their activities, but it is hoped rather to co-ordinate all agencies and stimulate activities.

EXTENT OF THE FARM LIFE PROBLEM.

The farm life problem in Texas is the Country Life movement of the Nation applied to the open country. It is in no sense a class problem. It is a city problem as well as a country problem, state, nation and world-wide. Dr. L. H. Bailey, Dean of the Agricultural College of Cornell University, defines the Country Life movement to be:

"The working out of the desire to make rural civilization as effective and satisfying as other civilizations; to make country life as satisfying as city life and country forces as effective as city forces."

Science, inventions and discoveries are influencing the business and social problems of the world; the people of the cities by organized cooperation are re-directing their business methods and social life in ways that gain to themselves excellent profits and the blessings of modern civilization. The rural country must do likewise or suffer decadence.

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No city is self-sustaining; they draw food, clothing and raw materials from the country. Diminish the supply of these and the cities suffer. The cities also draw much of their population from the country. Hitherto the ablest men and women of the cities have come from the country. These have been the cities' best asset. Let the country decay, its people will continue to flock to the cities, but instead of being an asset they will become a liability.

As has been said, "The country life problem is new to those only who have just discovered it."

Washington was the father of the movement in this country. He, in connection with Benjamin Franklin, in 1785, organized the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, and he made the promotion of agriculture the subject of his last message to Congress. This Society is the oldest of its kind in the United States and is still one of the most active. A Rural Life Conference for the State of Pennsylvania was held under its auspices March last, which was attended by leading people from all over the United States and by Sir Horace Plunkett, the great Irish reformer, who, Dr. Warren H. Wilson, Superintendent Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in U. S. A., says, has done more than all the home rulers to free Ireland from her poverty and banish the beggar from the Irish highway by the same methods that we must follow here.

Nothing appears to have been done by Congress in response to President Washington's message. Land was abundant, cheap and fertile, yielding surplus crops under the unscientific methods of its tillers. Two things resulted: the Nation was supplied with cheap food and clothing, and farmers gave little thought to science in their business or to soil conservation. After the Civil War, the railroads having penetrated the great West, farmers pushed out over the prairies of the Middle West and Southwest and, from 1870 to 1900, they mined the fertility out of the rich soil of these sections and continued to feed the Nation at prices so cheap as to utterly impoverish themselves. No soil is so rich that it cannot be exhausted. By and by, the yields became less and the demands greater, as population increased. In about 1900, consumption caught up with production. Then complaints of high cost of living became more or less general and reached the ears of the Government. A bureau was added to the Department of Agriculture and men were sent out to teach scientific methods of farming, soil building and conservation. They found the task a difficult one. Low prices, long hours of toil and hard times had depressed and discouraged the farmers and neglect had rendered

them suspicious of proffers of assistance. Their highways, schools and churches showed neglect and the community spirit was lacking.

THE ROOSEVELT COMMISSION.

These conditions were brought to the attention of President Roosevelt, who undertook to lend a hand. He appointed five men of high character and learning, of great patriotism and interest in rural life conditions, as a Country Life Commission. These were Dean L. H. Bailey, of Cornell; Dean K. L. Butterfield, of Amherst; Mr. Henry Wallace, of Wallace's Farmer, Iowa; Mr. Walter Page, of The World's Work, and Mr. Gifford Pinchot, of the Bureau of Forestry.

The Commission conducted a thorough investigation, holding thirty meetings in various parts of the Nation, and receiving over 120,000 written dissertations from country people and workers for the betterment of country life. The Commission set forth the results of its labors in an exhaustive report which was transmitted to Congress by the President, with an illuminating message. Congress seems to have been unfriendly and this report, a most valuable document, was not printed for public distribution. I wish to quote two paragraphs from the message of transmittal and one from the report:

"The farmers have hitherto had less than their full share of public attention along the lines of business and social life. There is too much belief among all our people that the prizes of life lie away from the farms. I am, therefore, anxious to bring before the people of the United States the question of securing better business and better living on the farm, whether by cooperation among the farmers for buying, selling and borrowing; by promoting social advantages and opportunities in the country, or by any other legitimate means that will help to make country life more gainful, more attractive, and fuller of opportunities, pleasures and rewards for the men, women and children of the farms."

"The farm grows the raw material for the food and clothing of all our citizens; it supports directly almost half of them; and nearly half of the children of the United States are born and brought up on the farms. How can the life of the farm family be made less solitary, fuller of opportunity, freer from drudgery, more comfortable, happier and more attractive? Such a result is most earnestly to be

desired. How can life on the farm be kept on the highest level, and where it is not already on that level, be so improved, dignified and brightened as to awaken and keep alive the pride and loyalty of the farmer's boys and girls, of the farmer's wife and of the farmer himself? How can a compelling desire to live on the farm be aroused in the children that are born on the farm? All these questions are of vital importance, not only to the farmer, but to the whole Nation."—Theodore Roosevelt.

"We must picture to ourselves a new rural social structure, developed from the strong resident forces of the open country; and then we must set at work all the agencies that will tend to bring this about. The entire people need to be aroused to this avenue of usefulness. Most of the new leaders must be farmers who can find not only a satisfactory business career on the farm, but who will throw themselves into the service of upbuilding the community. A new race of teachers is also to appear in the country. A new rural clergy is to be trained. These leaders will see the great underlying problem of country life, and together they will work, each in his own field, for the one goal of a new and permanent rural civilization. Upon the development of this distinctively rural civilization rests ultimately our ability, by methods of farming requiring the highest intelligence, to continue to feed and clothe the hungry nations; to supply the city and metropolis with fresh blood, clean bodies and clear brains that can endure the strain of modern urban life; and to preserve a race of men in the open country that, in the future as in the past, will be the stay and strength of the Nation in time of war and controlling spirit in time of peace."

The Commission suggested a broad campaign of publicity on the whole subject of rural life, until there is an awakened appreciation of the necessity of giving this phase of our national development as much attention as has been given to other interests. They urge the conserving of soil fertility, the necessity for diversifying farming; the need for better rural society is suggested; the better safeguarding of the strength and happiness of farm women; a more widespread conviction of the necessity for organization for both economic and social purposes, such organization to be cooperative, and the farmer is reminded that

he has a distinctive natural responsibility toward the farm laborer in providing him with good living facilities and in helping him to be a man among men.

The Country Life Commission made the following specific recommendations to Congress:

The encouragement of a system of thorough-going surveys of all agricultural regions in order to take stock and to collect local facts, with the idea of providing a basis on which to develop a scientifically and economically sound country life.

A system of extension work in rural communities through all land-grant colleges with the people at their homes and on their farms.

A thorough-going investigation by experts of the middle-man system of handling farm products, coupled with a general inquiry into the farmer's disadvantages in respect to taxation, transportation rates, cooperative organizations and credit, and the general business system.

An inquiry into the control and use of the streams of the country with the object of protecting the people and their rights therein.

The establishing of a highway engineering service to be at the call of the States in working out effective and economical highway system.

The establishment of a system of parcels post and postal savings banks.

The enlargement of the United States Bureau of Education, to enable it to stimulate and coordinate the educational work of the Nation.

Providing such regulations as will enable the States that do not permit the sale of liquors to protect themselves from traffic from adjoining States.

It was John Wanamaker who said that there were just four arguments against the establishment of the parcels post, and these were the four principal express companies of the Nation. To these four arguments against the publishing of the report of the Country Life Commission might be added certain middle-men organizations, the whiskey trust and those banking institutions which opposed the postal savings banks.

THE FARMERS' PROBLEM DIFFICULT.

But it may be that Congress thought that farmers should solve their own problems the same as city people are required to do. Farmers, unassisted, cannot do it, and there is a reason. Their occupation, habits and environments, essentially differing from those of city people, stand in the way. As a class they have little surplus above bare

subsistence; they live remote and their work keeps them apart from their neighbors, all of which render organization and cooperation, without which they can never solve their problems, most difficult.

Rural conditions in Texas in many respects are not so bad as they are in some States where factories and large cities have drawn heavily on the population and, by the Grace of God, we do not intend that they shall become so. When I say "we" I mean the press, the schools, colleges, the universities, the teachers, country preachers, Christian men and women, and I must add, the railroads, the local commercial organizations of cities, our State Educational and Agricultural Departments and our health officers, all of whom are willing and ready to help.

The Texas Farm Life Commission is in no sense a back-to-the-soil association—the need is better farmers rather than more farmers. If we shall make farming profitable by science in production and business methods of marketing, revive the community spirit, consolidate rural schools and supply them with efficient teachers, so that the children of farmers shall have educational advantages equal to those of the cities, and improve roads, so that the children can be conveyed to these schools as they are in Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, South Carolina, Louisiana and many other States, and so that the farmer can convey his products to the markets, visit his neighbor, attend his church and community meetings, the farmer boys and girls now living in the country will remain upon the farms and be successful and prosperous.

DANGER OF PEASANTRY.

The Country Life movement has become acute in this Nation; it is claiming the attention of the sociologists, the educators and the workers for moral uplift everywhere. Dr. L. H. Bailey enumerates forty agencies of organized forces making for a better rural life. All agree that unless we can succeed in making country life as satisfying as city life, ambitious people will not remain in the country and our rural population will surely become a Nation of peasants.

The average proportion of tenants to farm owners of all the States is 37%. Thinking people and students of conditions are alarmed at so great proportion of tenants on farms. Let us see how it is in Texas. I take these figures from the Agricultural Bulletin for Texas, 13th Census of the United States:

	1880.	1890.	1900.	1910.
Farms operated by owners	108,716	132,616	177,190	195,863
Farms operated by tenants	65,468	95,510	174,991	219,575

These figures show that in the last thirty years the proportion of tenants in Texas has increased from 37.6 per cent. of all farmers, in 1880, to 52.6 per cent. in 1910. In these thirty years, farm owners have increased at the rate of a little less than 3,000 a year, while tenants have increased at the rate of a little over 5,000 per year.

The tenant, having no interest in the soil and his tenure being from year to year, does not conserve fertility of lands, build schools or roads, and Dr. Wilson says he sets the social status of his community. It is the tenant and not the man who retards the community spirit. Let him become a land owner and he may become a community builder.

A GREATER DANGER.

I wish to point to another danger, which I consider is equally as undesirable as that of rural peasantry, and which seems to me more likely to occur; great agricultural corporations are likely to enter the field of farming. Col. Yoakum notes that it costs the farmers seven billion dollars to market six billion dollars of the 1911 farm products. If corporations had produced this output they would have marketed it for about half of seven billion dollars, saving at least three billion dollars marketing expense to themselves. This would add 50% to present prices received by farmers for their products. At such prices there is but one field of investments yielding better returns upon capital than would farming under corporate methods. The record at Washington of revenues for corporation earnings reveals that incorporated financial institutions and insurance companies had a net revenue in 1911 of 15.84% on capital invested; incorporated mercantile concerns, 10.13%; public service organizations, 4.17%, and manufacturing concerns, 4.80%. All the capital of the country cannot find investment in financial institutions and insurance companies, and a farming corporation would furnish its own hands with merchandise, which business offers the next largest returns upon capital. A great farming enterprise conducted by a corporation would operate its own gins, compresses, cotton oil mills and canning plans. It would operate on 4 and 5 per cent. money, where farmers pay 10 per cent. There is no class of labor

so cheap as farm labor. Then, too, there are men of accomplishment and training available to take the superintendency of such farms. Young men from the cities as well as from the country are attending our A. & M. Colleges. The Massachusetts State College reports 50% of its students from cities; the College of Agriculture of the University of Illinois reports 45% from cities; the Agricultural College of Missouri reports 33% from cities, and the New York State College of Agriculture reports 57% of its students from cities of 5,000, and over, and 51% from cities of 10,000 and upward.

The present methods of production and marketing farm products are wasteful and inefficient. In every other field where there is so much waste, corporate efficiency has taken possession and is coining that waste into gold. Under the present conditions and the spirit of the age, the only thing that will prevent great corporations from entering the agricultural fields of industry is for the farmers to combine and eliminate all waste from both the method of production and of marketing. Farming by corporations would bring more evils to our Nation than would farming by peasantry, because, in such event, rural people will become mere farm laborers and share tenants executing the plans of the foreman. This condition would bring the contest between socialistic and capitalistic theories face to face in final conflict.

While I have merely touched upon the extent and importance of the Country Life movement, surely I have gone far enough to make plain the wisdom and foresight that impelled the President of the Texas Commercial Secretaries and Business Men's Association to recommend the appointment of a Texas Farm Life Commission. The most obtuse will understand why the membership of that Association unanimously adopted the recommendation of its President, and why such far-seeing men as the executive committee of the Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union of the State should have so readily joined in the movement, and why the American Bankers' Association, the railroad companies, the local commercial clubs of the cities of the State, the Federated Women's Clubs, as well as patriotic men and women of every calling, educators and the press of the State are ready and willing to assist in the solution of this greatest of all problems confronting the people of Texas today.

If we are to save the rural districts of Texas from decadence we must bring about conditions in the country that will make country life as satisfying as is life in the city. We must give to the people who live on the farm the same educational advantages for their children as those

of cities enjoy. I have not the figures for the State, but in the entire United States there is \$12.00 per annum spent for education of the rural child against \$30.00 per annum for the education of the city child. We must also give to the country people, or they must make for themselves, good thoroughfares, and there must be created and fostered the community spirit until a better civilization is attained.

A SURPLUS IS NEEDED.

Right here I want to give you Sir Horace Plunkett's definition of civilization:

"Civilization as we understand it in this country, implies a certain standard of luxury and comfort. Further, that this comfort and luxury involves a surplus over and above the mere means of subsistence. A scheme of civilization involves, to my mind, a clearly thought-out plan for making and maintaining and for using that surplus."

The city has its surplus and a clearly thought-out plan for making, maintaining and using such surplus; the rural country has not, and this makes the difference between city and rural civilization.

It follows that the surplus is the first thing to bring into existence, as there will be no clearly thought-out plans for using such surplus until a surplus is in sight, hence, if we are to have better educational facilities, better roads and better social spirit in the country, we must along with such aspiration, if not in advance of it, pursue methods that will create a surplus above mere subsistence.

A SURPLUS IS IN SIGHT.

With the great work that is being done by the A. & M. College, our Experimental Stations, the Agricultural Department of the State, the Department of Agriculture of the Nation, the Texas branch of which is in the hands of that able and capable worker, Dr. W. P. Proctor, the Texas Industrial Congress, headed by that great patriot, Col. Henry Exall, all which is finding responses from many industrious farmers and farmer boys in Texas, a surplus is coming into sight.

I am warranted in saying that unless we improve our methods of marketing farm products, whatever surplus the farmers may grow will add little to the luxuries and comforts of the farmers. We had in Texas the last year a good peach and truck crop, but whatever surplus there

was rotted upon the ground. The prices to the consumer were maintained so high that only the rich could afford to purchase while the producers got less for the products than if there had been short crops. The cause is patent—business is organized while farmers are not, hence the only competition there was in the disposition of those crops was among the farmers themselves and that in the matter of selling.

SCOPE OF THE COMMISSION'S WORK.

The scope of the Commission's field is indicated by the five subjects selected and assigned to five sub-committees. These are:

The Production and Marketing of Farm Products—J. T. S. Gant, Archer City, Chairman.

Rural Credits—Edwin Chamberlain, San Antonio, Chairman.

Transportation—E. W. Kirkpatrick, McKinney, Chairman.

Rural Homes and Schools—Mrs. E. P. Turner, Dallas, Chairman.

Coordination and Cooperation—S. A. Lindsey, Tyler, Chairman.

The production as well as marketing of farm products will be considered together, because they are closely related. Prices are governed by the quantity and quality produced and the method of marketing. Take the product, cotton, for example: The value and price of cotton can be increased by seed selection, fertilizing and by cultivation, ginning and wrapping, at least five cents per pound; and by gradual marketing at least two cents a pound. Now, if we add, say five cents a pound to cotton values by such methods, we shall enrich this State and take nothing from the consumer because we shall give value for what we receive.

FARMERS' UNION.

Col. Peter Radford, President of the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, explained to the Welfare Commission at its session in San Antonio last year the Union's plan for marketing cotton... They were so business-like, so logical and reasonable as to win the admiration of those who composed the Welfare Commission for the wisdom and foresight of the Farmers' Union. All who are not acquainted with the plans, purposes and teachings of this great organization of farmers will do well to

acquaint themselves with them. This is an agricultural State. The prosperity of every business rests upon the prosperity of the farmers of Texas, hence it should be and is the great concern of the wisest of our business men, as well as farmers, that the farms of the State should produce the greatest crops possible and bring their owners the best prices obtainable.

COOPERATION NECESSARY.

I state deliberately that the farmers of Texas will never be prosperous until they adopt cooperative methods in the marketing of their products. I am warranted in saying this by the conditions which surround the farmer. I am also warranted in saying this by the experience of every Nation under the sun which has grappled with and solved this problem. Upon this subject I wish to quote the words of Sir Horace Plunkett while speaking to the Rural Life Conference for the State of Pennsylvania held at Philadelphia in March last year. Sir Horace said:

"I think the ultimate analysis will show that of all the causes to which the high cost of living is to be attributed, the chief cause is that the farmer has failed to apply new business methods both to production and distribution, and that he leaves distribution in the hands of multitudinous middlemen, unnecessarily costly, and often the middle interests victimize both the producer and the consumer.

"I am not talking about the railroad companies. So far as my experience has gone, at any rate in this country, there is nothing to be said against the railroad companies. They are eager to give accommodations to you and they will give accommodations to farmers provided the farmers will do as farmers on the Continent of Europe have been forced to do, combine together and consign their produce regularly, in bulk, of uniform quality. So far as railways participate in distribution they can get it done more cheaply than in any country in the world, that is, anywhere except where the railroads are owned by the State. The whole trouble is that the farmers don't work together; they waste energy.

"The contribution that I wish to make to your discussion today is simply this: We have found in Ireland, and my studies in many other countries have convinced me, that the thing to begin with

and the essential thing to do, neglect of which bars all progress, is the reorganization of the farmers' business. The great change that the farmers have got to make in their business methods is simply this: They have got to introduce methods of combination in their business and work together."

The Farm Life Commission, recognizing the advantages of cooperation to the business, educational and farming interest in every county, will undertake to secure the appointment of a kind of Local Welfare Commission in each county of the State, composed of one banker, the County School Superintendent, the President of the County Farmers' Union, the local Government Cooperative Agent and the Secretary of the local commercial organization. Such a commission or committee can encourage county fairs, educational rallies, good roads movements, farmers' meetings or institutes and in many other ways co-operate for the advancement of the community's best interest.

I do not believe that Dr. G. Walker Fiske has stated it too strongly when he said that the test of modern civilization is the capacity to cooperate.

RURAL CREDITS.

Rural Credits is important to the farmer. There are by the 13th census, 417,770 farms in Texas, the average size of which is 269.1 acres. It is reasonable to average one farmer to the farm. It is estimated that the annual indebtedness of each farmer is \$500.00. This would be about \$210,000,000 for all Texas farmers. The average rate of interest paid by Texas farmers is, I am sure, 10 per cent., or \$21,000,000 annually. The European farmer gets money at $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest by systems of rural banks—and these are based upon cooperation. If Texas farmers can secure 5 per cent. money they will save \$11,000,000 annually. In ten years they would have saved over \$100,000,000—enough to build all the roads and erect all the school houses needed in this State and add something to that surplus necessary to secure the conveniences and luxuries of modern civilization.

TRANSPORTATION.

Another committee is that on transportation. The transportation problem directly affects the farmer and the farmer's family, economically and socially. It begins with the road leading from his door to his school, his church, his mill, his gin, his postoffice and his market.

Bad roads are a tax, and a fearful limitation upon the business and social life of country people. Bad roads make three miles equal to ten, and require three hours of man and team where one should suffice. Good farming, good schools, good churches and good social conditions do not lie along bad country roads.

The farmer is also interested in steam and interurban railroads and their charges for transportation. It is up to him to do some investigation and thinking along these lines. He should know his rights and best interest and guard them intelligently.

This sub-committee is headed by a capable farmer and will go deeply into the problem of transportation as it affects farm life.

RURAL HOMES AND SCHOOLS.

Another committee is that on Rural Homes and Schools. Volumes have been written and volumes can yet be written upon this inexhaustible subject. The world is large and its wonders are many. One may travel from childhood to old age and see something new, wonderful and fascinatingly interesting every day. There are many interesting people in the world, but the little place we call home holds that which is of more interest to each of us than all the world, and all the people of the world, beside. The home interests and affects not only those who occupy it, but the community also. The influence of the home is reflected through its members upon the community. Society has an interest in the education and health of each of its members. The home is an important factor in both of these matters.

The rural homes and the rural schools shape the eternal destiny of rural boys and girls. If it be true, as Mr. Burbank says, that "a child absorbs environment; that it is the most susceptible thing in the world to influence, and if that force be applied rightly and constantly when the child is in its most receptive condition, the effect will be pronounced, immediate and permanent." Then, to begin with, rural schools need better grounds and better buildings.

If, as Dean Curtis of the Iowa College of Agriculture says, "The country school problem is the most important educational problem that has confronted the American people since the organization of the land-grant colleges," then we need longer school terms and more interested, capable and experienced teachers for our rural schools.

If, as stated by Dr. T. F. Hunt, Dean of the College of Agriculture of Pennsylvania, "If this Nation is to hold its

intellectual and industrial place among the Nations of the world vocational training must be provided for boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and the age of citizenship," then we need the rural industrial high school teaching agriculture as a science, manual training and domestic science, in every county.

The three first subjects for our sub-committees relate to the business of farming; that is, the creation and maintenance of that surplus requisite for modern civilization. The fourth relates to the spending of that surplus as well as maintaining it.

The fifth sub-committee will undertake to make a survey of the whole field, take an inventory of agencies at work and those available for the work of rural development, bring them together for council to the end that the several agencies may coordinate their respective works and cooperate therein.

FARMERS THE BEST LEADERS.

The farmers of Texas are in need of personal leadership. They have political leaders, but they need local industrial, community and educational leaders. Such leaders, if their leadership is to be effective, must be local and attached to the soil. The Farm Life Commission recognizes that we have all the agencies necessary to bring about redirection of farm methods and farm life and the re-establishing of the community spirit, if only these agencies will do the things that are practical and sequential. We must not expect to bring about redirection merely by conventions and exhortations. The work will be effective only insofar as we shall discover local leaders, impart to them the vision of the new civilization of the future and induce the men of the soil and those of the city to unite in the work of bringing about such new civilization.

THE NEW CIVILIZATION.

That the civilization of the future will differ from the civilization of the past, is the thought of some of our most profound thinkers. It will not be the civilization of the city nor the civilization of the country, but it will be that resulting from the interaction of one upon the other producing a stronger, freer and richer civilization than the world has yet known. It will be stronger because directed by the cooperative spirit; freer, because devoid of class prejudice, and richer because of the general enjoyment of modern comforts and conveniences, the better

diffusion of education and learning, the broader brotherhood of men and the universal equality of opportunities.

WHAT OUR AGENCIES CAN ACCOMPLISH.

I will mention only six of the active agencies in Texas which can and should render all the assistance necessary to develop in every rural community the necessary leadership to unify the community in problems of farm life. These are our educational forces, the government agricultural forces, the local commercial organizations of cities, the health officers of the country, the country clergy and the press of the State. Mark you, I say, "Assist," for the real work must be done by the farmers themselves, working through themselves and the community agencies directly under their control.

EDUCATIONAL FORCES.

Our educational forces consist of the State University, the A. & M. College, our Normal Institutes and the public school system. These are teaching agriculture, mechanics, manual training and domestic science, to a limited number. Our public school system has its State Superintendent, County Superintendents, teachers for every school and a Board of School Trustees in every community. Let these catch the spirit and vision of rural life, its needs, and potential richness, and impart that to one another until all are of one mind and purpose; let them work upon the patrons and non-patrons of their respective schools until they, too, shall catch the spirit and vision of fuller and richer life. Let the local teacher be a veritable missionary for education not only of school children, but of the people of their respective communities, also. Let them realize what education really is, its advantages and value, bring this to the attention of the farmers; make them understand that education that is worth while, like anything else, costs money and requires devotion and time; that it pays in exact proportion to the amount invested in it; that the best place to educate their children is at home, and that it is a duty as well as a privilege to build and maintain a school of the best type right in their own community; that good buildings and grounds are necessary to good education; that the best type of education is vocational, that it interests the child and enables it to learn book lessons more readily; impress them with the advantages of consolidating small schools, not only to the child in attendance but to the community, because it secures better teachers and

enables them to reside permanently and make their community and educational work continuous. Let earnest teachers hammer these matters until a convert is secured; recruit and use him from the moment of conversion. Others will fall in line and we shall not only gain ground throughout the country, but hold it when gained.

AN EXAMPLE.

In the little State of Maryland there is an industrial high school in every county. These have their corps of teachers and through extension work administer to all the county. They organize boys' corn clubs, girls' canning, cooking and sewing clubs. They hold farmers' short terms twice a year, which are attended by large numbers of farmers to hear the lectures. They give summer courses of instruction in the teaching of agriculture, manual training and domestic science to the rural school teachers, and organize community movements for a better social spirit. These high schools are to the county what the A. M. College is to the State, only their field being smaller their work is correspondingly more effective. These schools use their advanced boys in the organization of boys' corn clubs, because they have found that a successful boy corn grower can enlist more boys and better interest in the work than can men.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

Under the head of Government Agricultural Agencies, I include the State and National Departments of Agriculture, their several bureaus and departments.

In every county of Texas where the National Government has not a farm demonstration agent, the State Department of Agriculture should place one. This will not require much money. If the Legislature will not furnish it, raise the means otherwise. Self help is the best help. The State Superintendent of Agriculture should be sufficiently determined and tactful to do as the National Government is doing, supply the men and induce commissioners' courts and commercial organizations to pay the salaries. If he will do this for a year or two, the Legislature will get orders from home to furnish necessary funds.

These local demonstration farm agents should be under, attached to and a part of the County High School, where there is one, and where there is not, they should work in close touch with the County School Superintendent.

It will not be long, I hope, until the people will elect no one trustee, teacher or County Superintendent, except upon qualification. The success of the candidate for any office whose only qualification for the position he seeks is that he is a good mixer or campaigner is made possible only by the indifference of the people to the importance of the position he seeks to fill.

WHAT COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO.

The next agency available is the commercial organizations of cities. These can, if they will, do as much in the work we are speaking of as any agency in the State, if not more.

I wish I had time to give an outline of the methods of the Chamber of Commerce of Binghamton, N. Y. How it went into partnership with the Lackawanna Railroad and the Department of Agriculture at Washington and established a Bureau of Agriculture for the four counties lying within twenty-five miles of Binghamton. How it was the moving spirit of a soil and farm survey, by which accurate information was obtained of the strength and need of the soils, the annual output and consumption of the farmers, of the methods which were successful and unsuccessful; how the dairy farmer whose annual profits were ten dollars per cow was brought in contact with and under the tuition of the dairy farmer whose annual profits were one hundred dollars per cow, and how the 30 bushel per acre potato farm became a 150 bushel per acre farm; how cheap freight rates were authorized by the Railroad Commission on lime and fertilizers and these were brought directly from the kilns and factories and furnished farmers at first cost plus this reduced freight. How banks and business men furnished means without interest as an inducement for farmers to try out new plans advocated by the Government Agent of science. How by these and other means this Chamber of Commerce reclaimed from a condition of neglect and abandonment the territory of four counties about Binghamton.

The Commercial Club of the city of Tyler has done a great work for Smith County, but I have not time to enumerate it.

The commercial organizations of Texas are not worth support if they confine their activities to the limits of the city. The agricultural territory about the city offers bigger returns for attentions of the right kind than do investments in any other direction.

Every local commercial organization should take an inventory, or make a survey, of the territory surrounding at least co-extensive with the county limits. How many farms are operated by owners, how many by tenants, how many farmers produce a surplus, where do they live, what are their methods, what do they produce, what does it cost to produce corn, hay, cotton, butter, hogs, poultry, etc., in the county? What are the people of the county spending for corn, hay, meat, etc., grown outside the county? This knowledge is the basis of a business-like solution, and commercial organizations are composed of business men.

Such surveys will surprise many people when they see that farmers in some sections are not self-sustaining, and that the farmers are paying 80c to \$1.00 per bushel for corn which can be raised for less than half, and 15c to 25c per pound for bacon which they can produce at a third of such cost. Find out the leaks and wastes and set about correcting them, just like a business man will do in his business.

WHAT HEALTH OFFICERS CAN DO.

I have enumerated the State, County and City Health Officers, as an agency, because these officials have the attention and confidence of the people and can, if they will persist, enlighten all our people upon the question of home and school sanitation, the value of it, and make plain the enormous waste resulting from unsanitary conditions.

THE COUNTRY CLERGY.

I have included the country clergy as an agency of much potentiality because the country life movement is religious as well as industrial and social.

There should be a social and an industrial survey of every community. The pastor, the school teacher and the church and school officials are they who should make such survey. How many families in the community, how many are members of the church, how many members co-operate and can be counted on to stand for progress and growth in the community—who are they—what is the religious and educational status of all the members of the community? How many children attend school regularly? What children do not? Why?

How many farmers are self-sustaining? For a farmer to be self-sustaining he must produce about twice as much

as he consumes, and to be a good farmer he must produce three times as much as he consumes.

I read an account of a community survey recently up in Missouri. It showed the families spent annually an average of \$771.50 on themselves, \$12.00 on schools, \$6.00 on roads and \$3.00 on their churches. Another discovery was made by a farm survey in a community of New Hampshire. The average net annual income of 154 farmers who had a common school education was \$229.00, while the average net income of the 112 farmers of the same locality who had a high school education was \$482.00 annually. The high school education was worth to each farmer who possessed it, \$253.00 a year.

A thorough community survey will reveal conditions, show up the weak spots and open the way to correct things.

PASTORS AS BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS.

Dr. Carver said: "There are three classes of farmers who are satisfactory, satisfied and continually successful. They are the Mormons, the Scotch Presbyterians and the Pennsylvania Germans, who are thrifty, who are organized, who are economical and they are making good."

Dr. Wilson is authority for the statement that the Mormons, Scotch Presbyterians and Pennsylvania Dutch farmers are led by their clergy in church, social and business affairs, and that these are the most successful farmers of America. "They are on their farms," says Dr. Wilson, "from generation to generation; they stay there and they don't like the city. They idolize the country and they like the farm. They cry it out on the streets and they preach it in their churches; farming is their work and their watchword. In a Mormon church a brother will rise to give a deliverance, and when he gets up to talk he will announce a cooperative system. He may speak of a cooperative method or the best fertilizer, or about the best market for selling fruit, and he makes it clear that the community is held together by cooperation along these lines." "With these three orders, the Mormons, the Scotch Presbyterians and the Pennsylvania Dutch," continued Dr. Wilson, "their farming and their churches are the backbone of country life."

If the preacher would bring men into sympathy with God he must first get in touch with the daily life and problems of these men. In teaching cooperation in road, school, community building, and in marketing crops

he is preparing men to love one another and to adopt that broad brotherhood which is evidently to become the greatest strength of Christian forces in this world.

"The efficient country church," says Dr. Fiske, "will definitely serve its community by leading, when possible, in uniting the people in all cooperative endeavors for the general welfare, in arousing a real love for country life and loyalty to the country home." The same author also adds: "It will endeavor to raise the level of practical efficiency on every farm, making men really better farmers because they are real Christians."

The country minister must somehow get a vision of his great task as a community builder, says Dr. Fiske.

Johann Friedrich Oberlin refused calls to pulpits in the city and spent thirty years amongst the poor villagers of the Vosges Mountains, preaching, building roads, schools and teaching agriculture as a science and a business, filling the life of these poor people with the blessings of civilization and his own with rich and fruitful service and making glorious both his name and reward. Men, whether religious or not, should support the country church, because it is an essential power in every community, it can be made of great service to the community.

THE PRESS.

The press of the State is the active hand-maid and mouth-piece of all who are working for better farm life in Texas. The press of Texas is loyal, patriotic, progressive and full of vision of and optimism for a richer, riper and greater civilization of the future.

CONCLUSION.

The men of earth were once collectively engaged in trying to build a tower to the sky.. They were wasting their strength and energies in a useless undertaking and the Lord confused their tongues so that they could no longer cooperate. Since the failure of that collective enterprise, by a kind of atavism, there are people who doubt the success of every cooperative undertaking. These will be slow to join in our great work. Then there are others whose understanding of the motives of their fellow-kind is even more confused than were ever the tongues of the tower builders. The luxury of self-pity has become a habit with them and they refuse to join others in movements making for better conditions, fearing they will be led into some kind of ambush by the leaders, delivered

bodily to the "negro in the wood-pile," and made to turn the stone to grind the other fellow's ax.

To both these classes let me give assurance that our undertaking is not to build to the sky, but to the ground, upon the ground and in the soil; that it is both feasible and useful, helping all mankind; and that God is with and not against us, for we are engaged in His cause—the uplift of humanity. And to the latter let me say, if they will employ the rule for judging the motives of men given by Him who knew best human arts of deceit, they need not be deceived by either the men and women engaged in the Farm Life movement, or by themselves:

"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."

For the cause we represent rather than for ourselves, I invoke that test in judging of the motives of the noble men and women of this State who are uniting their energies with mine in efforts to bring to Texas and all the people of Texas, equality of opportunity, the advantages of education, civilization, social advance and moral uplift.



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